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6. (Amended-Clean Copy) A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the bit pattern is generated from the features using a representation scheme.

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8. (Amended-Clean Copy) A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the image is a fingerprint image and the features measures are of minutiae points.

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9 (Amended-Clean Copy) A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the image is a face image and the feature measures are of corners of the image.

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10. (Amended-Clean Copy) A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the associative memory is implemented using a neural network.

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12. (Amended-Clean Copy) A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein, in step (5), a symmetry key or public/private key pair is generated.

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14. (Amended-Clean Copy) A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein steps (1) - (4) are applied to a plurality of biometrics data sources, the key being generated from a respective plurality of retrieved bit patterns.

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16. (Amended-Clean Copy) A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein a plurality of keys corresponding to a plurality of persons are generated and the corresponding bit patterns are stored in two or more parallel associative memories.

17. (Amended-Clean Copy) A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein step (1) is performed a plurality of times to provide a plurality of samples and only invariant feature measures persistent in all samples are used to generate the key.
